

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim Amendments

The Applicant has amended claims 1-3, 5, 9, and 11. Applicant respectfully submits no new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 1-3, 5, 7-9 and 11 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant notes with appreciation the conditional allowance of claims 1-3, 5, 7 and 8. As the Examiner has suggested, claims 1-3 and 5 have been rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Examiner Objections – Drawings

The Drawings were objected to because of the omission of a “bypass path...directly connecting said splitting means to said second add element.” In this instance, the drawing is correct and the claim is incorrect. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to agree with the drawings and the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the objections to the drawings.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claim 9 has been amended to correct the wording to comply with the drawings. As noted in the rejection claim 9 recites the bypass path directly connecting to the second element. The claim has been amended to recite a bypass path connecting to the second element via the coupling element as shown in Figure 3. Claim 11 was amended to correct the antecedent basis of the coupling element.

The Applicant has corrected the deficiencies in claims 9 and 11 and respectfully submits that the claims as amended are now allowable.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter as the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to correct the antecedent basis in the claim. Additional amendments were made to claims 2, 3 and 5 to correct antecedent basis.

The Applicants have corrected the deficiencies in claim 1 and the Applicant respectfully submits that remaining dependent claims 2-3, 5, 7-8 are now allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicant believes all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

The Applicant requests a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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